

BARBARA MOTT: Hello. I'm Barbara Mott, and I work full-time. I came here all the way from South Knoxville, and I pay taxes and I'm talking as a taxpayer. A lot has been said. I have so much respect for the people who have suffered from coal mining and also great respect for the legacy of coal miners. And I want to say we are not enemies and I really want to move away from the us-them situation and framework. And, first of all, we haven't changed our tax rate in thirty years on the royalty rate from these minerals, from our resources. I want to know who the business advisers were on that. First of all, we are mining federal lands? I find that hard to believe. We are mining federal lands, and we have national parks that are suffering from economic loss. We need to -- desperately need to change the royalty rate on the return to taxpayers. As a taxpayer who took today off to do something else and then I found out about this comment period, and so I put what I was going to do on my day off aside to be here because this is an extremely important issue. And we can't ignore the young lady who has asthma, all of the gallbladder surgeries, the I went to the mountain and the mountain was missing. And our grandchildren are going to be going to the mountain and the mountain will be missing and more will be missing. And we need to do something. We need to take the resources that we have been cheating ourselves with and make serious plans and strategies with coal mining -- with coal miners and families and plan ahead together what will be best, how to transition away from a coal economy. And there are already plans being made. There are cooperatives. There are resources for owning your own company. Stop working for the man and work for yourself and work in a cooperative with other coal mining workers that you have known for years, and work together to do something that helps the environment, that helps local agriculture, that helps yourself and your family in a healthy way. And I just have so much respect for coal mining families. And I want that on the record. And thank you for this time. Please stop mining federal lands. Make that a permanent moratorium. And get our money that is owed to us. Thank you.